

HRSC-SW Operating Procedure 12351.6a

Subj: REDUCTION IN FORCE

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 12351.5F

Encl: (1) RIF Timeline/Checklist

1. **Purpose.** To establish procedures for conducting a Reduction-in-Force (RIF).
2. **Cancellation.** HRSC-SW SOP 12351.6 of 30 Jul 2003
3. **Scope.** These procedures apply to all activities serviced by the Human Resources Service Center, Southwest (HRSC-SW).
4. **Background.** Due to shortage in funding, change in mission, reorganization, a furlough of more than 30 calendar days or more than 22 discontinuous workdays, or other executive decision or operational circumstance that adversely affects the status quo, it may become necessary to downsize the current civilian workforce. RIF procedures may be required when such a determination is reached by management.
5. **Policy.** As indicated in the following subparagraphs, the number of positions projected to be abolished is a determining and critical factor in the length of time necessary to prepare for a successful RIF. Information required to conduct the RIF, specified in paragraphs 6.e.(8), (9) and (10), must be provided to the HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead within the timeframes indicated below and these timeframes used when preparing the RIF timeline/checklist using enclosure (1). Late receipt of any of this information will delay issuance of specific RIF notices by a number of days equal to the number of days information is past due.
 - a. If less than 20 positions are to be abolished, the required information must be received in the HRSC-SW at least two weeks prior to the date specific RIF notices are to be issued when a mock RIF has been conducted, and at least three weeks when a mock RIF has not been conducted.
 - b. If 20 - 49 positions are to be abolished, the required information must be received in the HRSC-SW at least three weeks prior to the date specific RIF notices are to be issued when a mock RIF has been conducted, and at least four weeks when a mock RIF has not been conducted.
 - c. If 50 or more positions are to be abolished, the required information must be received in the HRSC-SW at least four weeks prior to the date specific RIF notices are to be issued when a mock RIF has been conducted, and five weeks when a mock RIF has not been conducted.

6. Responsibilities.

a. HRSC-SW responsibilities

- (1) Establish Code 53 RIF Team and provide contact information to the HRO and management.
- (2) Participate in development of RIF strategy and timeline with HRO and management using enclosure (1).
- (3) Review applicable union contracts covering employees in the competitive area for potential impact on RIF process.
- (4) Review activity RIF instruction/policy, if any.
- (5) Provide Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) data check sheets to HRO for distribution to employees for review of information impacting retention factors, establishing deadline they must be returned to the HRSC-SW for review and required corrections in DCPDS.
- (6) Assist HRO in briefing employees on RIF process, as requested.
- (7) Verify all data impacting retention standing and accuracy of RIF process (i.e., competitive area, competitive levels, veterans' preference, length of service, performance ratings) and correct in DCPDS, as required.
- (8) Identify lines of progression in coordination with the HRO.
- (9) Prepare representative pay rate chart.
- (10) Review Expanded Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (EVSIP) requisitions to ensure no surplus positions are being matched and determine if management wants to continue to participate in the EVSIP program during the downsizing action.
- (11) Identify employees assigned to positions in formally designated training programs in coordination with the HRO.
- (12) Identify employees on Leave Without Pay (LWOP) or Annual Leave (A/L) who have been recalled to active duty and therefore not subject to RIF while they are in military service.
- (13) Identify employees on temporary promotion and crosscheck with the file extracted from DCPDS to ensure only the permanent position of record is used for the RIF.
- (14) As requested, conduct mock RIF(s) and provide results (and AutoRIF reports) to HRO and management.

(15) Notify DoD Civilian Assistance and Re-Employment (CARE) office and State Employment Office in advance if a large number of separations are anticipated as a result of a RIF.

(16) Establish retention registers using AutoRIF, conduct RIF, and generate all applicable reports for RIF documentation and HRO.

(17) Make qualification determinations using updated employee applications, if provided, and/or employee's OPF and determine assignment rights using position descriptions with the assistance of a subject matter expert or HRO representative, when needed.

(18) Prepare RIF notices informing employees of action taken and appeal/grievance rights, and Right of First Refusal entitlement, if applicable. Forward to HRO for signature and distribution to management for delivery to employees.

(19) Notify OPM and Department of Labor (DoL) when there are 50 or more separations within a competitive area.

(20) Establish individual employee RIF and Priority Placement Program (PPP) files, which will include a copy of the employee's updated application, if provided.

(21) Counsel and register affected employees in the PPP, with the assistance of the HRO and DOD CARE office, as needed.

(22) Register employees in Reemployment Priority List (RPL) upon employee request.

(23) Conduct subsequent RIF iterations as needed during the notice period, amend or correct RIF notices and deliver to HRO for signature and distribution by management.

(24) Provide HRO and management final AutoRIF reports, and any other RIF data required.

(25) Process resulting personnel actions using Request for Personnel Actions (RPAs) (SF 52s) received from HRO.

(26) Register eligible employees in the PPP Retained Grade Program immediately after RIF Position Change actions are effected/processed.

b. HRSC-SW responsibilities (Demonstration Project covered positions):

(1) Paragraphs 6.a.(1) through (26) apply, except (14), (16) and (24).

(2) Assist the HRO with running both the mock RIF(s) (if conducted) and the final RIF either manually or using available RIF software applicable for the Demonstration Project situation.

c. **HRO responsibilities:**

- (1) Participate in development of RIF strategy and timeline with management and HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead using enclosure (1).
- (2) Provide activity RIF instruction/policy to the HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead.
- (3) Provide a copy of the RIF approval letter to the HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead.
- (4) Review accuracy of competitive levels and performance ratings in coordination with HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead.
- (5) Identify lines of progression in coordination with the HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead.
- (6) For those RIFs where separations are anticipated, insure that Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) has been offered at least 30 days before RIF notices are issued.
- (7) Forward DCPDS data check sheets to employees for review of information impacting retention factors and forward any subsequent data discrepancies/questions from employees to the HRSC-SW RIF Team.
- (8) Brief employees on RIF process.
- (9) Provide employees in the impacted competitive area an opportunity to update their application (OF 612 or resume) and submit to the HRO for forwarding to the HRSC-SW RIF Team.
- (10) Identify reemployed annuitants that are not serving at the will of the employing activity (those employees in receipt of a Loss of Wage and Earnings Capacity [LWEC] award from Department of Labor in lieu of a disability retirement annuity) and provide to HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead.
- (11) Identify employees assigned to positions in formally designated training programs in coordination with the HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead.
- (12) Ensure all employees on LWOP or A/L who have been recalled to active duty have been documented in DCPDS so they are not subject to RIF while they are in service.
- (13) Identify employees/positions working with a medical accommodation and/or in a light duty status and provide to HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead.
- (14) Forward lists of position abolishments and vacancies identified by management for use as RIF placement opportunities to the HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead in accordance with the RIF timeframes identified in paragraph 5 above.

(15) If conducted, discuss results of mock RIF(s) with management and HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead.

(16) Open negotiations/consultations with available outplacement assistance organizations/programs (i.e., Private Industry Council [PIC], Workforce Investment Act [WIA] services, State Employment Offices, etc.). Conduct individual or group outplacement counseling.

(17) Identify employees with conduct or performance problems and provide to HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead.

(18) Insure RIF notices are signed by appropriate authority and distributed to management for delivery to employees, and forward copies of the acknowledgement receipt RIF notices signed by the employees to the HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead.

(19) Assist HRSC-SW RIF Team in the briefing/counseling/registration of eligible employees in the PPP, as needed.

(20) Notify employees in receipt of a RIF notice of separation who are eligible for severance pay if the command is authorizing payment of severance pay in a lump sum.

(21) Forward RPAs to cognizant Code 53 Team via DCPDS for processing of RIF actions. RPAs for employees who requested a lump sum severance payment must indicate the employee's request for, and confirmation of, the lump sum payment on the RPA.

(22) Prepare applicable RIF, VSIP and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) reports by deadlines mandated by higher authority.

(23) Respond to RIF Merit System Protection Board (MSPB) appeals or grievances filed under negotiated grievance procedures.

d. HRO responsibilities (Demonstration Project covered positions):

(1) Paragraphs 6.c.(1) through (23) apply.

(2) Depending upon the availability and applicability of RIF software for the Demonstration Project situation, both the "mock" RIF(s) (if conducted), and the "final" RIF may have to be conducted "manually" by the HRO with the assistance of the HRSC-SW RIF Team.

e. Management Responsibilities:

(1) When the possibility of conducting a RIF is first being considered, immediately consult with the HRO and HRSC-SW for guidance on what must be done to effect a RIF, and develop a RIF strategy and timeline using enclosure (1). This may include assistance with the early notification or consultation with labor organizations, if necessary.

(2) Address possible actions that might eliminate or minimize the need for RIF separations.

(3) Identify changes to the competitive area at least 90 calendar days prior to the anticipated effective date of the RIF.

(4) Meet bargaining obligations with labor organizations as required.

(5) Obtain all required RIF approvals from major claimant in accordance with reference (a) and major claimant policy.

(6) Announce RIF to employees.

(7) Establish cutoff date for performance ratings and freeze personnel actions such as promotions, reassignments, etc. which could impact retention standing of employees.

(8) Identify positions to be abolished and provide to the HRO by memorandum. This list cannot be modified once the RIF process has been initiated using AutoRIF.

(9) Identify vacant positions (if any) to be used for RIF placement purposes and forward via RPA using DCPDS, and provide a written statement if waiving qualifications for vacant positions used in RIF.

(10) Identify employees approved for VSIP and provide to the HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead in coordination with the HRO.

(11) Determine effective date of RIF and length of notice period.

(12) Determine if a lump-sum payment option for severance pay will be offered to separated employees, and ensure the resources needed to pay the lump sum benefit exists within the command's budget.

(13) Consult with HRO and HRSC-SW RIF Team Lead on results of mock RIF, if conducted.

(14) Deliver RIF notices to employees and obtain signed acknowledgement receipt.

(15) Prepare reports on results of RIF in coordination with HRO as required by higher authority.

(16) Submit RPAs via DCPDS to the HRO to implement personnel actions resulting from the RIF by the date indicated on enclosure (1).

f. Management responsibilities (Demonstration Project covered positions):

(1) Paragraphs 6.e.(1) through (16) apply.

(2) Review competitive levels including specialty area/functional codes, and use of performance ratings.

(3) Review and determine the applicability of available RIF software to the Demonstration Project situation.

g. Employee Responsibilities:

(1) After the need to conduct a RIF is announced, each employee is responsible for reviewing his/her DCPDS retention data for accuracy, and forwarding any discrepancies or questions to the HRSC-SW Code 53 RIF Team Lead via the HRO by the deadline provided.

(2) Submit an updated application (i.e., OF-612, resume) to the HRO by the deadlines provided for use in determining assignment rights during the RIF process and for PPP and RPL registration purposes.

(3) If the lump sum payment option is offered by management, an employee in receipt of a RIF notice of separation who is eligible for severance pay must submit in writing to the HRO their request for a lump sum severance payment.

7. **Effective date:** 19 December 2003

**RIF CHECKLIST & TIMELINE
FOR
(ACTIVITY/COMPETITIVE AREA)**

DATE		ACTION ITEM	COMMENTS
Start	End		
		HRSC/HRO meet to establish RIF timeline in coordination with management	Recommend that RIF planning begin at least 9 months prior to the anticipated effective date of the RIF, particularly when the RIF is due to an A-76 study. Depending on the size of the projected RIF, there should be a minimum of two HRSC personnel (one to function as RIF team lead) and one HRO representative who may also serve as the SME. If impacted employees are covered by a union, it's also recommended that a union representative be invited to observe the AutoRIF process so they have a good understanding of the process used to run the RIF.
		HRSC conducts database cleanup (i.e., SCD-RIF, performance ratings, tenure, veterans preference for RIF, competitive levels, competitive area) in anticipation of possible RIF. HRO should assist with review of competitive levels.	Recommend using PME desires 31, 33 and 52 to review potential SCD-RIF, tenure and veterans preference for RIF errors. An occupational series listing with an added column identifying the comp level works well in identifying errors in competitive levels. In addition, a report must be pulled to identify any positions in the competitive area where that field has not been correctly coded.
		Management submits requests for VSIP/VERA /RIF authorities	
		Management announces RIF to employees and notifies unions	Union agreements covering employees in the competitive area must be reviewed for potential impact on the RIF process and whether negotiated grievance procedures must be used instead of MSPB appeal procedures.
		Management establishes cutoff date for performance ratings used for RIF	
		HRO distributes employee data sheets (prepared by HRSC - code 20) to employees for verification of personal data affecting retention factors	Code 53 branch requests code 20 prepare the data sheets for distribution to the employee by the start date indicated. The end date is the date the employee must return the sheets to the HRO for forwarding to the HRSC.

		HRO requests employees update resumes for RIF/PPP (to be used when determining RIF assignment rights and for PPP registration)	Deadline for submission is _____ (must be prior to date RIF is conducted). If updated resumes are received after RIF notices are issued, they may only be used for purposes of PPP registration, not subsequent RIF iterations during the notice period). Any form of application is acceptable. However, a SF 171 usually will provide more information needed for purposes of RIF and PPP in determining quals for other positions and is encouraged in lieu of a resume or OF 612.
		HRO coordinates outplacement briefings for employees	Local One-Stop Career Centers will provide this service upon request using their Rapid Response teams. Typically, this service is provided after those employees impacted by the RIF have been identified, but advance coordination with the Career Resource Center is required.
		HRSC/HRO/Management conducts VSIP/VERA process (survey ltrs issued to permanent employees in selected occupational series/grades)	These actions must be coordinated with the Code 43 Retirement Branch for workload planning purposes.
		HRO/Management submits lists of positions to be abolished, vacancies to be offered (if any), and VSIP/VERAs approved	Refer to paragraph 5 of the RIF SOP for required timeframes.
		HRO/Management indicate in writing if they want to waive qualifications for vacant positions. Note: Positive education requirements cannot be waived.	It is recommended that management either waive all vacant positions or none. Unless it can be justified, picking and choosing which positions to waive quals can give the appearance that mgmt is manipulating the process in order to control the outcome. Waiving quals when conducting a RIF to implement a MEO is not recommended.
		HRSC/HRO develop normal lines of progression.	Initially, it is recommended that this be limited to the series of those positions being abolished. Additional series impacted under Round 2 can be input during the RIF process.
		HRSC/HRO reviews EVSIP requisitions to ensure no surplus positions are being matched and to determine if mgmt wants to continue to participate in the EVSIP program during the downsizing action.	It 's unlikely that commands undergoing a RIF will continue to participate in EVSIP since there's always the possibility of a match. It would be inappropriate to place a registrant (already facing RIF separation) in a command anticipating RIF action.
		Personnel actions frozen (all RPAs that impact an employee's retention standing) by management	It's not unusual that recruitment can be taking place while running a RIF. In fact, this can be expected when implementing a MEO, with

			mgmt usually offering up vacant positions for RIF placement. It is recommended that actions are frozen once the RIF has been announced to employees and unions notified. Any subsequent personnel action taken that impacts retention standing could be perceived as an attempt to manipulate the outcome of the RIF. Details and temp promotions are permissible during the notice period.
		HRO identifies RPAs already at HRSC-SW that impact competitive area, specifying those to be processed and those to be returned without action.	RPAs to be processed are dependent on the date personnel actions are frozen and exceptions approved by the HRO and management.
		HRSC identifies employees who have transferred but remain in the database because a pickup SF50 has not yet been processed.	These employees must be deleted from the AutoRIF database prior to conducting the RIF.
		HRO/HRSC identifies employees assigned to positions in formally designated training programs	In addition to separate competitive levels, employees in formally recognized training programs require special consideration when making RIF placements.
		HRSC prepares representative pay rate chart	
		HRO/Management/HRSC identifies employees on LWOP (or A/L) who have been recalled to active duty. Those identified are not competing employees for RIF and will be removed from the AutoRIF retention register.	Per the USERRA of 1994, employees who enter the uniformed services are not subject to RIF while they are in service. After they return from active duty, they cannot be discharged (except for cause) for 1 year if they served for more than 180 days, or for 6 months if they served for more than 30 but less than 181 days. See 5 CFR 353.209 and 5 CFR 351.404.
		HRO/Management identifies employees/positions working with a medical accommodation and/or in a light duty status	For consideration in displacement process during RIF
		HRSC conducts mock RIF	The number of mock RIFs will vary depending on the size of the RIF and the amount of time available for this purpose. For RIFs anticipated due to an A-76 study, it is suggested that a mock RIF be conducted for both the win and lose scenarios, if time permits. It's not unusual that mgmt will want to delay issuing VSIP/VERA offer ltrs until after a mock RIF is conducted, using the results to determine those offers which would

			best minimize the adverse impact of the RIF. A second mock RIF run after the VSIP/VERA offers have been made/accepted/approved is advantageous as a preliminary run prior to the real RIF being conducted.
		HRSC provides results of mock RIF to HRO	
		HRSC prepares employee RIF files	See Employee RIF file checklist on shared drive
		Tentative A-76 decision (if applicable)	
		VSIP offer ltrs issued to employees selected	A list of those to be given offer letters must be provided to the Code 43 Retirement Branch for workload planning purposes (at least one week prior to issuance of the ltrs)
		HRO/Management reviews mock RIF results and submits changes to list of positions abolished, vacancies to be offered, VSIP/VERA offers accepted/approved	
		HRO/Management identifies employees with conduct and performance problems and/or provides statement certifying that all other employees adversely impacted by the RIF are eligible for PPP registration	For consideration in determining PPP ineligibility
		HRSC requests severance pay calculation worksheets from code 20 (used as enclosure in specific RIF notice)	When it's a small RIF, code 53 assistants can calculate severance pay under DCPDS using Job Aid #18-15 and a worksheet will be generated.
		HRSC/HRO reviews and edits RIF notice templates/enclosures to be used for RIF	It is important to review the RIF notice templates and enclosures to ensure items specific to the competitive area/geographic area are accurate (i.e., phone numbers and POCs on WIA and EDD enclosures, appeal process, etc.). Ensure there is activity letterhead available in sufficient supply for the number of RIF notices to be prepared (unless the plan is to send the RIF notices electronically to the HRO for printing at their office). Also, ensure you have allowed enough time for DAPS to print the MSPB appeal regulations.
		HRSC runs real RIF and prepares specific notices	It is recommended that a list of employees on temporary promotion be requested from code 20 at the same time the AutoRIF extract file is created. It's always a good idea to cross

			check that list with the file to ensure only the permanent position of record is used for the RIF. In addition, a list of VRAs/SCEPs/Handicap Appts due for conversion by the RIF effective date must be requested in order to manually edit the AutoRIF database to include those employees in the competitive RIF. AutoRIF automatically takes care of any career tenure conversions once the RIF effective date is input into the program. A list of employees who are retirement eligible by the RIF effective date or retired military needs to be requested from code 20 to determine who's ineligible for severance pay so that can be addressed in the RIF notice.
		HRSC provides HRO with specific RIF notices, including Right of First Refusal notification, if applicable; all applicable RIF enclosures; and RIF reports generated via AutoRIF	Remember that the DoD Displaced Employee Guide must include a copy of the MSPB appeal regulations, which can be obtained at www.mspb.gov/title5.html . The appeal form is available at www.mspb.gov/text/applform.pdf
		Final decision on A-76 study (if applicable)	
		Managers issue RIF notices to employees	A copy of the first page stamped with an acknowledgement of receipt block is signed/dated by the employee and returned to the HRSC for retention in the employee RIF file. This page is provided by the HRSC at the time the RIF notices are delivered to the HRO.
		HRSC/HRO counsels/registers eligible employees in PPP and RPL. RPL Employee Notification Sheet, Checklist and Registration Application will be provided by the HRSC. Employees in receipt of a RIF notice of separation may apply for registration on the RPL upon receipt of the notice and NLT 30 days after the effective date of the RIF action. Employees MUST submit a resume in order to be registered in the RPL.	For large RIFs involving mass PPP registration, <u>early</u> coordination between the HRSC and the CARE office is essential in order to ensure CARE office availability to provide the employee briefing, counselor training, and review of registrations as they occur. For those RIFs not requiring mass PPP registration, the HRSC specialist(s) must contact the PPP Unit to receive refresher PPP counselor training/PPP checklists and packages prior to conducting the registrations.
		HRSC notifies OPM and DOL if 50 or more separations within the competitive area	

		HRO notifies chief elected official if 50 or more separations within the competitive area	
		HRSC prepares employee PPP files	Employee PPP files are retained in the code 53 branch during the notice period, and provided to the PPP Unit after the effective date of the separation or position change action.
		HRSC requests code 20 begin running cumulative gain/loss reports for subsequent RIF iterations	Reports should be run from the date the AutoRIF extract file is created to ensure any actions processed from that point are taken into consideration.
		HRSC conducts additional RIF iterations as needed and issues amended and corrected RIF notices	
		HRSC updates PPP registrations as RIF impact changes due to subsequent iterations and continues to register employees in RPL as requested	Close coordination between the Code 53 branch and the PPP Unit is essential during the RIF notice period. Once RIF actions are processed and eligible employees are registered in Program R, all PPP employee files must be submitted to the PPP Unit.
		HRO submits RPAs for final RIF actions	It is suggested that this be accomplished over a two to three week period depending on the number of actions to be processed, and usually beginning about two to three weeks prior to the RIF effective date. You want to avoid receiving all the actions at the same time and at the last minute.
		RIF effective date for separations	Please remember that actions must be processed in inverse order beginning with the separation and working backwards in RIF chain order. It's therefore suggested that specialists provide their assistants with the OPFs w/copy of action to be taken on top in the order the actions are to be processed.
		RIF effective date for reassignments and position change/CLG actions	
		HRSC registers eligible employees in Retained Grade Program	This should be accomplished as quickly as possible after the RIF effective date, usually within one to three days depending on the number of eligible registrants.
		HRO responds to MSPB appeals/negotiated grievances/EEO complaints filed during appeal periods	HRSC specialists who conduct the RIF can expect to be asked to serve as witnesses during RIF MSPB hearings, and to provide any additional documentation that may be required.

		Management/HRO prepares VERA reports	
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